from: https://www.pcfd.org/guides/firewise-landscaping-and-zoning/

Firewise Landscaping and Zoning | Park City Fire District

- Home
- Guides
- Home Fire & Wildfire Safety
- Firewise Landscaping and Zoning

Tips to Reduce Fuel for Fires

The primary goal for Firewise landscaping is fuel reduction—limiting the amount of flammable vegetation and materials surrounding the home and increasing the moisture content of remaining vegetation to reduce fire risk around the residence.

The home itself and everything around it, between 100 and 200 feet is known as the home ignition zone, the area that poses the greatest danger to the home if a fire breaks out. In areas across the country where the risk of wildfire is high, such as high desert areas like Park City, the home ignition zone extends up to 200-feet beyond the actual home structure.

As we enter into spring in the Wasatch it's important to begin preparations to reduce fire risk in our community. With our hot dry summers, homes in Park City are more at risk than the average home. Creating a firewise landscape is the first step to securing your home and reducing risk of dangerous wild fires.

Seven Considerations for Firewise Landscaping

When designing and installing a firewise landscape, consider the following:

- Local area fire history
- Site location and overall terrain
- Prevailing winds and seasonal weather
- Property contours and boundaries
- Native vegetation
- Plant characteristics and placement (duffage, water and salt-retention ability, aromatic oils, fuel load per area, and size)
- Irrigation requirements

The Zone Concept

To create a firewise landscape, remember that the primary goal is fuel reduction. To this end, initiate the zone concept. Zone 1 is closest to the structure; Zones 2-4 move progressively further away. Each zone requires unique steps to reduce fire danger.

Zone 1:

This zone encircles the structure and all its attachments (decks, porches, etc).This well-irrigated area encircles the structure for at least 30 feet on all sides, providing space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency. Plantings should be limited to carefully spaced fire resistant species.

- Plants should be carefully spaced, low-growing and free of resins, oils, and waxes that burn easily.
- Mow the lawn regularly and prune trees six to ten feet from the ground.
- Space conifer trees 30 feet between crowns. Trim back trees that overhang the house.
- Create a fire-free area within five feet of the home, using non-flammable landscaping materials and/or high-moisture-content annuals and perennials.
- Remove dead vegetation from under deck and within 10 feet of house.
- Use fire-resistant material for patio furniture, swing sets, etc.
- Remove firewood stacks and propane tanks.
- Water plants, trees, and mulch regularly.

Zone 2:

This zone is roughly 30 to 100 feet from the home. Fire resistant plant materials should be used here. Plants should be low growing, and the irrigation system should extend into this section.

- Leave 30 feet between clusters of two to three trees, or 20 feet between individual trees.
- Encourage a mixture of deciduous and coniferous trees.
- Create ‘fuel breaks’, like driveways, gravel walkways and lawns.
- Prune trees up six to ten feet from the ground.

Zone 3:

This zone is 100 to 200 feet from the home. Place low-growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area, remembering to keep the volume of vegetation (fuel) low.

- Remove smaller conifers that are growing between taller trees.
- Remove heavy accumulation of woody debris.
- Reduce the density of tall trees so canopies are not touching.

Zone 4:

This furthest zone from the structure is a natural area. Thin selectively here and remove highly flammable vegetation.

With these steps you can protect your valuable landscape and homes. As always, be safe Park City!

For further information, please visit the **National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Firewise USA website.**